



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
16 April 2019

Original: English

2019 session

26 July 2018–24 July 2019

Agenda item 20

United Nations research and training institutes

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) develops the capacities of individuals, institutions and organizations in Member States and other United Nations stakeholders through high-quality learning solutions and related knowledge products and services to enhance decision-making and support country-level action for overcoming global, national and local challenges. The Institute also engages in training-related research and advisory services to support Governments, the United Nations and other partners in the achievement of broader social and economic goals.

Under its 2018–2021 strategic framework, the Institute's programme of work is guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of other major conferences held in 2015, including the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Paris, and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa. The Institute's strategic direction is also inspired by the call of the Secretary-General for United Nations entities to be the best providers in their domain, to follow integrated approaches, to be responsive to the differentiated demands of Member States, to deliver as one, in partnership with other United Nations entities and to be nimble and results-driven.

By the end of the implementation period of the 2014–2017 strategic framework, UNITAR had reached over 185,000 beneficiaries from all Members States, with 110,050 individuals (or 60 per cent) benefitting from UNITAR learning and related services during the 2016–2017 biennium. Results from the first year of implementation of the 2018–2021 strategic framework are highly encouraging; thus far the Institute has provided learning, training and related knowledge-sharing services to 84,901 individuals, 63 per cent of whom were associated with programming under the peace

* The present report was submitted beyond the agreed submission date of 21 March 2019 as the result of updated procedures for the approval and clearance of reports of the Secretary-General since the last report was prepared in 2017.



and planet pillars. Moreover, the number of learning-related beneficiaries, totalling 60,901 individuals, or 72 per cent of all beneficiaries, was the highest ever recorded.

In accordance with the principles of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, UNITAR continues to focus its attention on developing the capacities of the over 90 countries in special situations, including fragile States and States emerging from conflict, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. As in the past, the majority of the Institute's learners, at 38 per cent, are in Africa, the region with the largest number of distressed countries. Gender features prominently in the framework's priorities with the objective of achieving gender parity among beneficiaries by 2021 (without counting the military or police contingents in peacekeeping-related programming), in line with the United Nations system-wide strategy on gender parity.

The Institute's financial situation continues to be marked by stability and growth. Total income for the 2016–2017 biennium was \$51.6 million, representing an 11 per cent increase over the 2014–2015 figure of \$46.5 million. Recognizing the challenges associated with tightly earmarked project funding, in November 2018, the Board of Trustees created the Strategic Framework Fund to serve as a loosely earmarked funding facility to support programming in strategic areas that help Member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular for beneficiaries located in the most distressed countries.

The Secretary-General recommends that Member States commend the Institute for the significant growth in its programming and beneficiary outreach achieved in 2018 and for the alignment of its programming with the 2030 Agenda.

It is also recommended that Member States provide their full support to enable the Institute to continue efforts to meet learning and other capacity needs, in accordance with its mission and strategic objectives, and that Member States and other stakeholders, including relevant United Nations entities, strengthen partnerships with the Institute and consider providing financial support to the newly established Strategic Framework Fund.

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is a dedicated training arm of the United Nations. With the aim of strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization, the Institute's mission is to develop the capacities of individuals, institutions and organizations in Member States and other United Nations stakeholders through high-quality learning solutions and related knowledge products and services to enhance decision-making and to support country-level action for overcoming global challenges. The Institute also engages in training-related research and advisory services to support Governments, the United Nations and other partners in the achievement of broader social and economic goals, such as strengthened multi-stakeholder engagement, early ratification and implementation of environmental agreements and enhanced coordination of relief by humanitarian agencies in the wake of natural disasters.

2. Under its 2018–2021 strategic framework, the Institute's programme of work is guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of other major conferences held in 2015, including the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Paris, and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa. The Institute's strategic direction is also inspired by the call of the Secretary-General, contained in his report on repositioning the United Nations development system ([A/72/124-E/2018/3](#)), for United Nations entities to be the best providers in their domain, to follow integrated approaches, to be responsive to the differentiated demands of Member States, to deliver as one in partnership with other United Nations entities and to be nimble and results-driven. A summary of the key results achieved as of 2017, which brought the 2014–2017 strategic cycle to a close, are presented in section II below.

3. Section III covers the current planning cycle and provides an overview of the Institute's work streams under the four pillars of the strategic framework, peace, people, planet and prosperity, and its cross-cutting programme pillars, highlighting the various successful and impactful projects and initiatives that UNITAR delivered in 2018, the first year of the 2018–2021 strategic framework.

4. Section IV addresses the financial situation of the Institute, which is marked by stability and growth, and in section V, the report concludes with a recommendation that the Member States provide their full support to enable the Institute to continue its efforts to meet learning and other capacity needs, in accordance with its mission and strategic objectives, and that Member States and other stakeholders, including relevant United Nations entities, strengthen partnerships with the Institute and consider providing financial support for the newly established Strategic Framework Fund.

II. Concluding the 2014–2017 strategic framework

5. The 2015 report ([E/2015/12](#)) and the 2017 report ([E/2017/48](#)) on UNITAR provide updates on its work under the 2014–2017 strategic framework, a period marked by steady growth in programming and beneficiaries. During the 2014–2017 cycle, the Institute laid the groundwork for its contribution to building the capacity of national partners to implement the 2030 Agenda, including efforts to mainstream the Agenda through national policies, programmes and plans, as well as to monitor progress. In addition, the Institute continued to work in five other important areas, namely: strengthening multilateralism; promoting economic development and social inclusion; advancing environmental sustainability; promoting peace; and improving

resilience and humanitarian assistance. By the end of the four-year cycle, UNITAR had reached over 185,000 beneficiaries from all Members States, with 110,050 individuals (60 per cent) benefiting from its learning and related services during the 2016–2017 biennium. This represented the largest outreach achieved over any two-year budget cycle in the Institute’s history and the third consecutive year in which the benchmark of 50,000 beneficiaries was surpassed.

6. By the end of 2017, the Institute had delivered a cumulative total of 497 events, equivalent to 3,474 event days over the calendar year: 71 per cent of these events were delivered face-to-face, with 60 per cent of event locations in developing countries; 66 per cent of the Institute’s beneficiaries, or just over 38,000, took part in training events with specific learning outcomes.

7. In 2017, 85 per cent of beneficiaries of UNITAR learning programmes came from developing countries, with 52 per cent of beneficiaries from countries in special situations, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. Other developing countries and developed countries represented 33 per cent and 15 per cent of the Institute’s beneficiaries, respectively.

8. In 2017, 57 per cent of the total number of UNITAR beneficiaries were male and 43 per cent were female. This figure does not include beneficiaries from the UNITAR peacekeeping training programme, who are excluded because of the programme’s large outreach to military and police contingents, which are mostly made up of men; their inclusion would skew the overall gender ratio. UNITAR is committed to achieving gender parity in its programming, however, and several concrete steps have been taken in this regard (see section III below).

9. Feedback from UNITAR learners remained positive in 2017, as shown in responses from an annual survey: 91 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the training was useful overall; 85 per cent affirmed that the training was relevant to their job; 75 per cent indicated that the information they received was new; and 90 per cent confirmed their intention to use their newly acquired knowledge and skills. In a random sample of 9,700 participants of learning-related events, 82 per cent of respondents confirmed that they had applied or transferred learned knowledge or skills in 2017.

10. The Institute’s level of output is significant and growing, and the contribution that it is making to help Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda is increasing as well. While all beneficiary outputs were associated with results aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, 80 per cent of beneficiary outputs were associated with activities aligned with Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production, Goal 13 on climate action and Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. More than half of the 80 results areas in the UNITAR programme budget were either strongly or moderately aligned with the relevant Goal when the target indicator or indicators were considered. While it is often difficult to determine the Institute’s contribution, given the relatively small size of most of its projects, there are some areas where its contributions are likely to be significant, notably in the area of climate action, which accounted for more than a third of UNITAR learners during the 2016–2017 budget period.

11. In addition to trained individuals, UNITAR also produced other products and services, the most noteworthy being the rapid mapping imagery and analysis undertaken by the Operational Satellite Applications Programme, the operational, technology-intensive programme of the Institute that is focused on satellite and geographic information system mapping and analysis. Over the course of the 2016–2017 biennium, 661 satellite imagery-derived maps and reports were produced to support the international humanitarian community, covering both natural disasters

and conflict situations, such as the floods in Bangladesh, Haiti and Mozambique, a tropical cyclone in Madagascar, an earthquake in Iraq and the crises in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

III. Implementation of the 2018–2021 strategic framework

12. As discussed in the previous report on UNITAR (E/2017/48), the Institute engaged in a process to articulate the 2018–2021 strategic framework under the overall guidance of its Board of Trustees and other advisory bodies, including consultations with key donors and partners. The new strategic framework structures the Institute's objectives, programming and activities under the pillars of peace, people, planet and prosperity of the 2030 Agenda, in addition to cross-cutting programme pillars on accelerating the implementation of the Agenda, multilateral diplomacy and optimizing the use of technologies for evidence-based decision-making. The process also provided the opportunity to identify the following key strategic enablers to achieve the objectives: the Institute's human capital and institutional partnerships; quality, learning and evaluation; strategic communication; and enhanced business processes. The Institute's organizational structure is aligned with the strategy, with division directors leading the development of programming under the relevant thematic and cross-cutting pillars, as well as leading operations and strategic planning and performance.

13. In terms of programme delivery, UNITAR continues to work towards achieving its high-level results, with more than two-thirds of the 87 results areas in the 2018–2019 programme budget aligned with Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13 and 16. In many instances, however, programming not only addresses one primary Goal, but has linkages to others. Tracing the interconnections among the Goals is central, though also challenging, given the relatively modest size and limited time frame of most UNITAR projects.

14. From a beneficiary perspective, UNITAR continues to place emphasis on strengthening the capacities of individuals from developing countries, especially those from countries in special situations. In 2018, the steady growth witnessed during the 2014–2017 strategic cycle accelerated considerably, with an increase in overall beneficiary outreach to 84,901 individuals, representing an increase of 49 per cent over the 2017 figure of 56,897. This increased outreach was achieved through the delivery of 683 events, equivalent to 6,012 event days. In 2018, 63 per cent of beneficiaries were associated with programming under the peace and planet pillars. The number of learning-related beneficiaries was also the highest ever, reaching 60,901 participants, or 72 per cent of all beneficiaries.

15. The female-to-male gender ratio among the Institute's training-related beneficiaries was 36:56 (with 8 per cent classified as "other"), and 45:54 (with 1 per cent classified as "other") when not including beneficiaries from the Institute's peacekeeping-related programming, which is predominately made up of male peacekeepers from African countries.

16. Approximately three-quarters of the Institute's learners are from developing countries, and UNITAR continues to monitor the geographic coverage of its beneficiaries with a view to achieving the intended results. In accordance with the principles of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first, UNITAR continues to focus its attention on developing knowledge, skills and other capacities for beneficiaries in over 90 countries in special situations, including fragile States and those emerging from conflict, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The success of efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda is ultimately measured against the

progress of countries in such situations. In terms of geographic regions, Africa, which has the largest number of countries in special situations, continues to account for the majority of the Institute's learners, at 38 per cent. In total, 83 per cent of learning-related beneficiaries are from countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East, and almost half represent non-State sectors, such as non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector, followed by 33 per cent representing national, State and local governments.

17. Gender features prominently in the framework, with the objective of achieving gender parity among beneficiaries by 2021 (without counting the military or police contingents in peacekeeping-related programming), in line with the United Nations system-wide strategy on gender parity. In addition to two existing gender-specific results areas in the programme budget on women's leadership in diplomacy and in disaster risk reduction in the Pacific, UNITAR added three new gender-specific results areas, two of which are aimed at building the capacity of women as agents of change to promote peace in Africa and one of which is designed to address gender, governance and the Sustainable Development Goals in Afghanistan. The Institute also remains committed to ensuring that planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting are gender-responsive. The Institute is working to develop staff capacity in the field of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment and to implement human resources policies that facilitate gender parity in staffing and create an enabling work environment. On the recommendation of its Board of Trustees, as of 2019, in addition to taking the development status and gender considerations of beneficiary countries into account, UNITAR is including disability and age groups in the disaggregation of its data.

18. As in previous years, the Institute has produced other products and services, notably the rapid mapping service undertaken by its Operational Satellite Applications Programme. In 2018, the programme was used on 27 separate occasions to support field workers and decision makers in formulating their response and recovery efforts following natural disasters by producing 61 maps that provided geospatial information products and derived data. The programme was also employed in response to conflict situations; data are not yet available on the latter use of the programme.

A. Peace

19. Under the strategic framework's peace pillar, UNITAR continued to pursue programming aligned with Goal 16, including activities aimed at strengthening capacities to effectively support social integration and peaceful coexistence and to negotiate and mediate mutually beneficial and lasting solutions. UNITAR has strengthened its high-level engagement activities with Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations. In this vein, the Institute continued with the planning and facilitation of two high-level events to assemble: (a) the special and personal representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General for a seminar (which is now in its fifteenth year); and (b) the outgoing, sitting and incoming members of the Security Council from Member States in Africa with the Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and senior officials of the African Union Commission for a seminar (which is now in its sixth year). Convened by Algeria and the African Union Commission, in collaboration with UNITAR, the latter event provided an opportunity for participants to receive briefings from special envoys and representatives of the African Union on the current peace and security situation on the continent, as well as a brief overview of the challenges facing the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

20. As a continued contribution to the programme Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations (2016–2020), the second UNITAR regional training programme in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy for the Asia-Pacific region was conducted in the Philippines. The programme, which was focused on peace, security and reconciliation, was completed by 36 mid-level and senior-level officials from ASEAN member States and from Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, representing Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Offices of the President, the ASEAN secretariat and related national and ASEAN institutions. Fifty-three per cent of participants were women, including women working at the level of Director General, Director, Assistant Director and Assistant Secretary of Ministries of Foreign Affairs, as well as project officers engaged in peacemaking and reconciliation. Senior practitioners from several regions presented case studies and lessons learned on inclusive peacemaking and on women and peace and security. Theory and practice sessions were conducted on conflict analysis, sources of conflict, listening skills, negotiation and reconciliation to deepen knowledge and strengthen skills in these vital areas.

21. Thirty-three senior-level and mid-level female diplomats, staff of United Nations and African Union peace missions, regional and subregional organization staff and civil society representatives completed the first dedicated UNITAR training programme on strengthening the capacities of African women peacemakers, which was conducted in Addis Ababa. Participating officials were from Offices of Presidents, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Ministries of Gender and African Union and United Nations peace missions. Seven members of the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise) took part in the programme, including a member of the Committee of Elders of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and a former Minister for Foreign Affairs. Six participants presented case studies in two peer-to-peer sessions to exchange knowledge and experience about women's contributions to peace efforts, mediation and reconciliation and on national action plans for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security. The programme, which builds upon the annual regional training programme for officials across the continent, is dedicated to enhancing opportunities for women and their contributions to peace efforts in Africa. In June and July 2018, UNITAR delivered induction training for 50 representatives of FemWise on preventive diplomacy and mediation.

22. The Institute continues to run predeployment training for police and military personnel who are to be deployed to United Nations peace operations. In 2018, UNITAR trained 10,714 military personnel from 11 troop-contributing countries deployed to United Nations and African Union peacekeeping missions. One of the Institute's largest projects is the predeployment training programme for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Implemented in close partnership with the Bamako-based Alioune Blondin Beye Peacekeeping School and funded by the Government of Germany, the project harmonizes and standardizes the knowledge base and skills required of the formed police units to properly deliver on their responsibilities and roles as part of the regional and international stabilization efforts in Mali, with the aim of strengthening the capacities of the African formed police units to provide better support for stabilization efforts and contribute to creating conditions that are conducive to sustainable peace. The key beneficiary countries of the training programme include Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal; a total force of 616 formed police unit officers, 38 trainers from the Alioune Blondin Beye Peacekeeping School and 26 focal points of the police-contributing countries were trained through the programme in 2018.

23. Within the context of the intra-Syrian political process under the framework of Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#), UNITAR is also contributing to the development of the comprehensive capacity development package being implemented from November 2018 to December 2019 for the Syrian Women's Advisory Board, which was formed in February 2016 by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, with the support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The package is aimed at leveraging the broad range of expertise, experience and knowledge existing among women of various generations on the Advisory Board and fostering the development of a collective identity, thus helping Advisory Board members to work together effectively to create viable options and solutions that will lead to an accommodation and consensus in the context of the Syrian peace talks.

24. Highlighting a renewed emphasis on engagement with other United Nations entities, the Institute jointly implemented the youth leadership programme on innovating for a sustainable impact, held in Amman. The three-day event brought together 100 regional representatives of youth-serving organizations, technical experts and alumni of previous youth leadership programmes with the overall goal of designing and presenting various action plans to enhance the regional mobilization of youth towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The programme involved representatives from 13 Arab countries, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, the Sudan and Tunisia, as well as from the State of Palestine, who participated in sessions that covered a range of topics, such as the incorporation of gender equality, social innovation, support for youth political participation, risk analysis and the training of trainers. Programme participants subsequently incorporated the results of their learning into their own contextualized local events and activities. They continue to contribute to and develop a best-practice knowledge portfolio for the region.

25. Through the Institute's satellite office in Hiroshima, Japan, UNITAR has continued to contribute to post-conflict governance recovery in Afghanistan, Iraq and South Sudan. This will continue, with increased emphasis on reaching those furthest behind first, as has been evidenced by the increasing numbers of female and youth participants being sought from those States, along with other target areas, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as working to ensure the participation of representatives of provinces, rural areas and underserved regions.

26. Starting in 2018, the anti-corruption training programme for the Sahel region, conducted by the UNITAR office in Hiroshima, in a transition from its earlier areas of focus, began to examine the practices and processes required to effectively engage youth to build transparent and accountable systems within the region. In partnership with the Gorée Institute, a pan-African organization based in Senegal, the programme provides training annually to 20 participants from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal.

27. Building upon the successes of the Institute's capacity-building activities in Afghanistan since 2003, the Hiroshima office has designed a new women's leadership programme for Afghanistan, which examines gender, governance and the Sustainable Development Goals. The five-month programme, with in-person workshops in both Kabul and Hiroshima, which are augmented by online learning, allows the 20 female participants from government and civil society to examine the key components and objectives of the Goals. The trainers work to help participants identify relevant targets and indicators within their own spheres of responsibility and influence around which they can design and implement change. The programme, which is opened by way of an personalized video message from the First Lady of Afghanistan and which incorporates resource persons from UNITAR, UN-Women and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), examines gender and the Goals, as well as

women's leadership, and involves participants in the design of projects that examine the contextualization and mainstreaming of the Goals into self-identified areas of need.

28. With a strengthened focus on engagement with small island developing States, the Hiroshima office has developed an in-depth workshop in Japan for female representatives from such States in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. With a focus on tsunami and preparedness planning, as well as public engagement, the office's training programme on women's leadership in tsunami-based disaster risk reduction, which is held to coincide with World Tsunami Awareness Day every year on 5 November, examines the key principles of disaster risk reduction and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The programme also incorporates elements of gender-inclusive leadership and helps participants to identify opportunities in their own communities to effect change, in particular through the use of multi-stakeholder coalitions. Incorporating lessons learned from the magnitude-9 earthquake off the coast of northern Japan in 2011, the programme includes female leaders, one from government and one from civil society, from each of 18 States and territories in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. This allows for the creation of a network of similarly trained women facing similar issues and gives them the opportunity to compare and contrast ways of improving disaster risk reduction within their own contexts.

B. People

29. Under the people pillar, UNITAR continues to focus on promoting people's well-being, including the protection and empowerment of groups that have been marginalized and are vulnerable. The promotion of road safety and the provision of assistance to Member States in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities is a significant initiative under this pillar. UNITAR is committed to contributing to halve the number of fatalities and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020 by promoting behavioural changes among road users through advocacy efforts and increased awareness of risk factors, and by enhancing the capacity of government authorities and key stakeholders regarding road safety management and leadership. In 2017 and 2018, 13 training workshops were conducted in countries with high fatality rates, reaching 1,896 beneficiaries, including government officials and law enforcement officers from countries with high rates of road traffic deaths. In addition, the Institute, in collaboration with the International Training Centres for Authorities and Leaders Global Network, academic institutions and the private sector, hosts educational programmes and delivers campaigns to raise awareness among youth of the importance of adopting a respectful traffic culture in order to prevent and reduce traffic incidents.

30. In 2019, UNITAR will continue to build capacity to improve road safety by providing training to law enforcement officers on the implementation of high-visibility enforcement campaigns to help to reduce alcohol-related fatalities and crashes.

31. The International Training Centres for Authorities and Leaders Global Network continues to expand and to act as an instrumental arm of UNITAR. With 18 centres located across Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australia and Europe, the Global Network contributes to efforts of the Institute to provide in-country capacity-building and training. The centres serve as hubs for the exchange of knowledge among government officials, the private sector, academia and civil society in key areas related to sustainable development. The network enables UNITAR to reach out to local authorities and other stakeholders, covering a wide range of thematic areas related to governance and urban development, economic development and social inclusion,

environmental sustainability and the 2030 Agenda. In 2018, 23,190 participants took part in various learning and knowledge-sharing events, up from 14,029 participants in 2017.

32. The UNITAR Division for People is also actively engaged in the timely and important subject of international migration, most notably through the organization of the annual Mayoral Forum on Mobility, Migration and Development. Launched in 2013, the Mayoral Forum is the annual global gathering for municipal and regional leaders on migration, development and displacement. It was founded and is co-organized by UNITAR, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration, the World Bank and others, with the support of the Government of Switzerland. The fifth Mayoral Forum, held in December 2018, was attended by nearly 200 participants from around the globe, among them more than 85 mayors and local government representatives from all continents. This most recent dialogue among local authorities was timed to coincide with the historic Migration Week, which was held in Marrakech, Morocco. The day-long Mayoral Forum, which was held following the Global Forum on Migration and Development, served as a prelude to the historic adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakech in December 2018, which concluded a two-year process of negotiations.

33. The discussions at the fifth Mayoral Forum directly influenced the historic undertaking of the Global Compact and included the adoption of the Marrakech Mayoral Declaration, entitled “Cities working together for migrants and refugees”, which was also presented at the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, held on 10 and 11 December 2018. In the Declaration, common priorities were identified for cities in the follow-up to and review processes of the Global Compact, such as: addressing special needs and reducing vulnerabilities; providing access to basic services; and empowering migrants, refugees and societies to realize full inclusion and social cohesion, including through employment and skills mobility. Signatories to the Declaration, also expressed their commitment to advancing the principles and objectives of the Global Compact at the municipal level, and called upon the international community, national Governments and the private sector to work hand-in-hand with cities in these endeavours. Since migration remains primarily an urban and local phenomenon, cities are at the forefront in the management of its impact. In addition, the Mayors Migration Council, a new initiative to help cities to have their voices and interests reflected in international deliberations and policies concerning refugees and migrants, was launched at the fifth Mayoral Forum. UNITAR remains committed to capacity-building so that cities can manage migration flows in a way that is sustainable and that fosters the well-being of both migrants and host communities.

34. Recently, UNITAR launched a new initiative under the people pillar, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 3 on good health and well-being, aimed at ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being at all ages. The initiative introduces a comprehensive inter-agency online knowledge hub, hosted by UNITAR. Its main objective is to support stakeholders in health-related areas in systematically identifying knowledge gaps and developing the capacity to enhance the impact of existing health initiatives and programmes. Capacity-building that enhances the capability of organizations at the national, regional and local levels to address the social determinants of health inequalities is an important instrument in tackling social health inequities. Today, lack of awareness, limited knowledge and inadequate skills are often bottlenecks that must be overcome to solve the world’s many global health challenges. In response, concrete outputs under the initiative include awareness-raising efforts, training materials and capacity-building activities. In 2018, UNITAR joined forces with the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop and launch a

nutrition knowledge hub. By building the technical and functional capacities of all relevant staff at WHO through e-learning courses and key nutrition-related training and knowledge materials, the hub contributes to the acceleration and increase of the nutrition impact at the country level. Through the hub, free and open courses are offered to reach a wider public and raise awareness of the malnutrition problem and the response of WHO. In 2019, UNITER will continue to work with the main global health stakeholders to develop similar learning courses on other major global health issues, such as vaccination and immunization, HIV/AIDS, mental health and good surgical practices.

C. Planet

35. Under the planet pillar, UNITER works to support the conservation, restoration and safeguarding of the planet for present and future generations by fostering a green, low-carbon and climate-resilient transition, as well as by strengthening the sound and sustainable management of chemicals and waste.

36. In the area of climate action, the Institute continues to participate actively in the One United Nations Climate Change Learning Partnership, a global partnership that supports countries in the design and implementation of systematic, recurrent and results-oriented climate change learning under article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Launched in 2009, the Partnership currently includes 36 multilateral organizations and is active in more than 20 countries.

37. In 2017 and 2018, the Climate Change Learning Partnership, the secretariat of which is hosted by UNITER, continued to promote global climate literacy, and its e-learning platform continued to consolidate its position and visibility as one of the most relevant climate change learning portals globally. This is attested by the almost 170,000 users from 195 countries registered on the platform and the almost 30,000 certificates issued as of December 2018. The platform was upgraded, becoming mobile-friendly and accessible to people with visual impediments. Its catalogue of free e-learning resources was also enriched, with the inclusion of a massive open online course on agriculture, a course and tutorial on reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the aviation sector, courses on gender and the environment and the green economy, an updated course on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the translation of existing products into other languages.

38. At the national level, the Climate Change Learning Partnership continues to assist countries in taking a strategic approach to climate change learning through the development and implementation of climate change learning strategies. This includes a regional action plan on climate change education, training and awareness-raising for 2017–2022, developed jointly by the eight member States of the Central American Integration System through a regional programme supported by the Partnership, the launch of national climate change learning strategies in Burkina Faso and Ethiopia, the setting up of a new regional knowledge- and experience-sharing hub in West Africa and the launch of a strategy development process in four additional countries. The Partnership also continued to support partner countries in implementing their existing strategies. Activities included the organization of a series of youth climate camps in Indonesia, the launch of a manual for the training of desk officers on climate change in Uganda and efforts to integrate climate change and green economy topics in school curricula in Ghana.

39. In 2017 and 2018, the Climate Change Learning Partnership continued to promote innovation by engaging in initiatives, including the organization of four new youth climate dialogues, providing a space for high school students in various

countries to discuss climate change issues, establishing three new editions of the climate classroom, providing 45-minute learning sessions on key climate change topics to busy delegates at major international conferences and collaborating with the private sector. The Partnership continued to promote the visibility of climate change learning at the international level.

40. In addition to participation in the Climate Change Learning Partnership, the Institute has continued its active engagement with the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, which brings together the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization, UNDP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and UNITAR, whose mandates, expertise and networks, when combined, can offer integrated and holistic support to countries on the inclusive green economy. The Partnership for Action on Green Economy operates in 17 partner countries and delivers a range of global products, including capacity development and knowledge production.

41. Human capital is an important enabler and driver of the green transition. As one of the founding members of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, the Institute's green development and climate change programme develops the capacities of individuals and training institutions through a range of services, including global training products on the inclusive green economy, foundational and specialized training in partner countries, support for identifying green economy learning priorities and strategy development, and the sharing and exchange of knowledge.

42. At the national level, the Institute coordinated the support of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy in two partner countries (Burkina Faso and Mongolia) and delivered three training courses for trainers on how to provide effective training on the inclusive green economy, reaching 50 trainers. The Institute supported four countries in evaluating their green economy learning needs and delivered corresponding strategies and measures, and supported the work of four national learning institutions in developing academic courses on the green economy, delivering more than 10 national training workshops.

43. In the field of chemicals management, UNITAR supports the efforts of countries to strengthen their national capacities to manage mercury and comply fully with the national obligations of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. In 2017, the Institute organized three workshops related to the Minamata Convention. Areas of support included capacity-building and training, ratification of the Convention, policy reform, development of national action plans for artisanal and small-scale gold mining and Minamata initial assessments, and phase-out activities. UNITAR, in collaboration with UNEP, also coordinates training on inventories.

D. Prosperity

44. Under the prosperity pillar, UNITAR works to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth and to create decent working opportunities for all by strengthening employability capacities, developing skills for multi-stakeholder collaboration and enhancing knowledge on trade, finance and intellectual property. Over the past two years, the UNITAR unit responsible for the public finance and trade programme has developed and implemented several regional and global training activities in partnership with other United Nations entities, regional economic commissions, multilateral development banks and regional training institutions.

45. Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNITAR expanded its collaboration to develop and deliver a suite of e-learning courses on trade, food security and nutrition in English, French and Russian for the benefit of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia, including

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The joint courses with FAO strengthened government capacities in those regions to develop and implement evidence-based trade policies and formulate and negotiate trade agreements, taking into consideration both the need for economic growth and structural transformation and food security and nutrition concerns. The relationship between trade and food security is attracting increased attention on both the trade and development agendas. With the eradication of global hunger by 2030 a key goal of the 2030 Agenda, trade is recognized as one of the means for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Through another joint course on developing gender-sensitive value chains, FAO and UNITAR developed the expertise of project managers and designers, staff of extension and advisory services and policymakers.

46. The partnership between UNITAR and the West African Institute for Financial and Economic Management, which started in 1998, reached another milestone with the development and implementation of a number of courses in 2017 and 2018 on public sector debt management and banking supervision for officials of the central banks and Ministries of Finance of the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Over the years, the role of UNITAR in the partnership has been to strengthen the institutional capacity to harness information and communications technologies to deliver quality training across the region in a cost-effective manner.

47. In partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa, through its subsidiary, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, UNITAR launched an e-learning course based on the *Economic Report on Africa 2017*, entitled “Urbanization and Industrialization for Africa’s Transformation”. The objective was to provide stakeholders from government, business, civil society and academia with a better understanding of how urbanization can serve as an instrument of accelerated industrialization and structural transformation in Africa and to encourage national Governments to take calculated steps to create links between urban and industrial development within the broader framework of their domestic plans. The course, which was delivered in English and French, was attended by more than 100 African officials who actively participated in it.

48. The Institute’s partnership with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa is focused on a technical assistance programme on private sector development, which is aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the Bank’s operations in sub-Saharan Africa. A training needs assessment exercise on strengthening human resources and the development and delivery of an online course on private sector development for English-, French- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa will guide the capacity-building activities of the partnership from 2017 onwards.

49. The partnership also covered the implementation of two joint two-week face-to-face training courses on strengthening the capacities of officials from sub-Saharan Africa regarding project monitoring frameworks and tools. The courses, held at the Bank’s headquarters in Khartoum, were attended by officials from Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Eswatini, the Gambia, Mozambique, the Niger and Senegal, who are involved in overseeing infrastructure projects financed by the Bank. The courses were focused on the transfer of knowledge in developing and implementing effective project monitoring frameworks, in organizing and visualizing project monitoring indicators using geographic information systems and in collecting data using geospatial tools.

50. UNITAR has launched a collaboration with the higher education sector to accelerate efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Universities occupy a unique position within society. With a broad mandate over the creation and dissemination of knowledge, universities have long been powerful drivers of global, national and local

innovation, economic development and societal well-being. As such, they have a critical role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and will also greatly benefit from engaging with them. In addition to the Institute's existing partnerships with universities, two partnerships, one with the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and one with Champlain College, were launched in 2018 in order to identify and co-develop concrete activities in support of the Goals. Furthermore, a new joint Master of Science programme in responsible management and climate action was launched in cooperation with Franklin University Switzerland.

E. Cross-cutting programme areas

51. In addition to the thematic pillars of peace, people, planet and prosperity, UNITAR works in three cross-cutting areas, including programming aimed at accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level, support for evidence-based policies through technologies, including geospatial technologies, and multilateral diplomacy.

Accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda

52. The Institute's work in helping Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda has evolved over the years. While initially aimed at raising awareness of the 2030 Agenda through a massive open online course, UNITAR has been focusing more recently on facilitating learning about mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level using whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches through the organization of regional learning conferences, with events held in Abuja, Addis Ababa, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, and Shanghai, China.

53. In addition to supporting learning about the Sustainable Development Goals, UNITAR has partnered with the United Nations Statistics Division to develop StaTact, a statistical tool, to enable countries to address measurement gaps that impede progress on pressing policy priorities relating to the Goals, especially in the short term. StaTact provides an analytical framework and a multi-stakeholder methodology to enable a team of national experts from national statistical offices, relevant ministries and other parts of the data community, including non-traditional data sources, to design a short-term action plan with a focus on addressing institutional impediments to data collection, production and utilization. The toolkit was developed through pilot testing in the context of three regional workshops held in Bangkok and Addis Ababa, in February and March 2018. The 14 countries that have taken part in the workshops to date are Bangladesh, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nepal, the Sudan, Togo and Uganda. The objective is to bring together producers, holders and users of data and help them to achieve their goals. The toolkit contributes to more sustainable and resilient societies through improved data governance and data utilization for policymaking purposes in selected priority areas.

54. The role of StaTact is to help countries to identify quick fixes, as well as to address bottlenecks that they face in implementing long-term plans, such as national strategies for the development of statistics and national development plans. The StaTact toolkit is aimed at strengthening the availability and utilization of data by policymakers to build stronger and more resilient societies through better dialogue and collaboration within national statistical systems and the leveraging of administrative data and other non-traditional data sources, such as big data.

Optimizing the use of geospatial technologies for evidence-based decisions

55. The Operational Satellite Applications Programme is a leading tool used by several partners in implementing the CommonSensing project. Funded under the International Partnership Programme of the Space Agency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the project is aimed at improving resilience to the effects of climate change in three Commonwealth small island developing States, namely, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The Institute will work with the relevant Governments and partners, including Satellite Applications Catapult, the Commonwealth secretariat, Devex, the Radiant Earth Foundation, the University of Portsmouth, the United Kingdom Meteorological Office and Sensonomic, to contribute to sustainable development and disaster risk reduction for those small island nations, which are severely affected by climate change.

56. The CommonSensing project will leverage earth observation data to provide stakeholders with access to vital information regarding disaster and climate risks to inform planning, food security needs and environmental assessments. The information will be readily available to beneficiaries through a web portal and mobile applications.

57. The Institute seeks to contribute to the development of national and regional technical capacities to inform policy and secure sustainable funding after the end of the project. The CommonSensing project will create long-term investment loops, define priorities for future proposals to climate funds and deliver a durable service platform that will run for at least three years after the project end date. The project has a total budget of 9.6 million pounds sterling and will last for three years.

58. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Institute and the United Nations Office for Project Services in 2018 to provide a cooperative framework for collaborating on research and innovation on the use of geospatial information technologies in support of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, as well as other United Nations entities. Included in the memorandum is the recognition of the Operational Satellite Applications Programme as a centre of excellence within the United Nations for satellite image analysis and geospatial applications. There is also an agreement for the Institute, and the Applications Programme specifically, to provide awareness-raising, training and capacity-development to the Executive Office and other United Nations entities on the use of satellite imagery and related geospatial information technologies and to provide satellite imagery analysis in support of the Executive Office, including the Innovation Lab and the United Nations Operations and Crisis Centre.

59. The Institute and the United Nations Office for Project Services identified the following thematic areas to explore for collaboration: promoting the 2030 Agenda and the use of technology; humanitarian crises, human security and human rights; and innovation in geospatial information technologies.

60. The Operational Satellite Applications Programme continues to train individuals from beneficiary countries on the use of geospatial information technologies, including training on disaster risk reduction for individuals from eastern African and south-east Asian nations. This includes customized face-to-face training sessions, technical backstopping, data access and communities of practice. Trained government officials are able to apply the acquired knowledge and skills to their jobs after the training.

Multilateral diplomacy

61. Strengthening the knowledge, skills and awareness of delegates to perform effectively in the United Nations arena continues to be an important and strategic

dimension of the Institute's work. In addition to serving as the Organization's "go-to" hub on understanding the dynamics of the United Nations system, organs, processes and procedures for diplomats and other delegates at both the country level and at venues where the United Nations maintains a significant presence, the Institute has expanded its training portfolio in partnership with the Moscow State Institute of International Relations by offering three joint Master programmes in multilateral diplomacy, project management and humanitarian cooperation and the external relations of regions of the Russian Federation. The Institute has also partnered with the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya to offer a joint online Master programme in international affairs and diplomacy. The Master degree is based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, which is recognized throughout Europe and the world. In addition to the Master degrees, both institutions offer the possibility of studying for a postgraduate certificate in world studies and a postgraduate certificate in diplomatic practice, covering specific subjects. The Master programmes and the two postgraduate certificates are designed for diplomats as well as staff of governmental and non-governmental organizations, graduate students, young researchers and other academics wishing to gain a thorough understanding of international affairs and diplomacy on a self-paced basis and to acquire soft skills to thrive in their careers.

62. The Institute also organized 14 tailored workshops to provide Saudi Arabian diplomats with a unique learning environment to enhance their knowledge and skills in diplomacy and international affairs. The participants strengthened their capacities in the field of multilateral diplomacy through workshops that were focused on a number of related areas, inter alia, building leadership skills, enhancing the understanding of the multilateral working environment of the European Union and strengthening skills and capacities in the field of multilateral negotiation and conference diplomacy. The satisfaction rates recorded in response to the workshops were extremely high: over 90 per cent of the participants deemed the content of the workshops to be relevant to their jobs and agreed that they would use the information that they had acquired in their own work.

63. The Institute's office in New York, while still providing traditional training courses on topics such as effective negotiation and human rights, has branched out into a number of frontier issues. In February 2018, the office provided a seminar on the potential applications of artificial intelligence, during which a Georgetown University fellow outlined the broader applications of artificial intelligence technology and the head of Artificial Intelligence of North America at Accenture spoke in more detail about its potential applications in the medical and industrial sectors. In March 2018, the office organized a seminar on cyberspace and cybersecurity policy issues, risks and strategies. During the seminar attendees were challenged to actively monitor their online presence and to keep in mind the potential risks posed by connected infrastructure and personal devices in mind. In April 2018, a seminar was held on blockchain and cryptocurrencies, on what they are and the potential applications they may have for the United Nations. Finally, in June 2018, a seminar on virtual and augmented reality was organized jointly with the Office of Information and Communications Technology.

64. The New York office has also released the second version of the "How To" application, which enhances the dissemination of integral United Nations documents and basic administrative forms, as well as information on core United Nations bodies and other resources that are essential for the Organization's activities. The application has been celebrated by the international community as an effective way for delegates to navigate the United Nations system.

IV. Financial situation of the Institute

65. The Institute's financial situation continues to be one of stability and growth. Total income for the 2016–2017 biennium was \$51.6 million, representing an 11 per cent increase over 2014–2015 figures of \$46.5 million.

66. The Institute continues to be heavily reliant on a small number of donors; the top 10 donors provided 69.6 per cent of total donor contributions for the year 2017. UNITAR has concluded several multi-year agreements with partners, significantly increasing its balance of receivables.

67. Overall, UNITAR remains in sound financial health. Its accumulated surpluses increased from \$21.3 million in 2016 to \$25.6 million in 2017, which resulted from a reported surplus for the year of \$4.6 million and a reduction of \$0.319 million in the actuarial valuation of post-employment liabilities. Current ratios have improved, owing predominantly to the holding of only short-term investments and an increase in voluntary contributions receivable from the signing of multi-year agreements. Key financial ratios also confirm that there are sufficient net assets for UNITAR to meet both its short-term and longer-term liabilities.

68. In November 2018, at its fifty-ninth session, the UNITAR Board of Trustees adopted the revised programme budget for 2018–2019 of \$57.338 million, representing an 11.65 per cent increase over the programme budget for 2016–2017. Recognizing the challenges associated with tightly earmarked project funding, the Board of Trustees created the Strategic Framework Fund to serve as a loosely earmarked funding facility to support programming in strategic areas that help Member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular for beneficiaries located in the 93 countries in special situations. While non-earmarked contributions to the General Fund have continued to be low and unpredictable, the Institute's management is optimistic that the loosely earmarked Strategic Framework Fund will prove to be a fruitful means to leverage further support from the donor community and provide an opportunity for programme growth and impact.

69. The Institute received an unqualified audit opinion of its financial statements from the Board of Auditors for the years 2016 and 2017.

V. Recommendations

70. It is recommended that Member States acknowledge the Institute for the significant growth in programming and beneficiary outreach that it achieved in 2018 and for its efforts to align its programming to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

71. It is also recommended that Member States provide their full support to enable the Institute to continue efforts to meet learning and other capacity needs, in accordance with its mission and strategic objectives, and that Member States and other stakeholders, including relevant United Nations entities, strengthen partnerships with the Institute and consider providing financial support to the newly established Strategic Framework Fund.